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JAPAN VIEWS LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS

SUMMARY

Japanese media heralded Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa's address to the late January summit of the 15 members of the United Nations Security Council as an important departure from Japan's heretofore passive diplomatic tradition. In calling for an overhaul of the U.N.'s organization and functions, Mr. Miyazawa came about as close as any Japanese leader has in this or other international forums to making a formal request that Japan receive a permanent seat on the Security Council. Such a status, some Japanese policymakers have argued, would reflect more fairly Japan's emergence as a global economic power and its related, sizable contributions to the U.N. budget. Permanent membership on the Security Council also would enable Tokyo to demonstrate its interest in helping to foster global peace and stability through actions other than "writing checks."

While Japan gradually has assumed a higher profile on a variety of political and economic issues considered by the United Nations, it is questionable whether Tokyo really is prepared t assume the attendant obligations of permanent Security Council membership. On a practical level the Japanese government does not have enough qualified personnel at the United Nations, particularly at the secretariat level, to significantly affect policy development and, in general, support a much expanded role. More fundamentally, the Japanese public may not yet support the country's assumption of major power responsibilities, judging by Tokyo's inability during the past year and a half to enact legislation that would authorize Japanese participation in U.N.-sponsored peacekeeping activities.

The United States and other permanent Security Council members also are opposed to reconfiguring the U.N. leadership structure at this time because that would entail amending the charter. Washington fears that such an action would precipitate a snowball effect from other member countries demanding changes. Rather than fighting domestic and international sentiments — or waiting idly for these views to evolve, Tokyo's foreign policy professionals instead may nudge Japan toward global center stage by quietly and gradually building a record of policy achievements within the United Nations and/or other multinational organizations.

Japan Looks to United Nations to Play Global Role

Kindred Philosophies - Tokyo has placed a high priority on being a full participant in the United Nations and its specialized agencies since becoming a member in 1956. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its annual diplomatic "blue books" typically has characterized Japan's foreign policy as being "U.N.-centered." To a nation that nearly 47 years ago formally renounced war as a means of settling international disputes, this multinational organization appears to embody the pacifist ideals embraced by a defeated people.

Once Japan began formulating its own diplomatic guiding principles after the occupation ended in 1952, the government readily adopted the peace preservation goals outlined in the U.N. charter. Thus, like this giant multinational body, Tokyo's external relations have been shaped by a desire to help maintain international political stability, promote world economic development and facilitate global dispute settlement. These goals correspond nicely with participation in the United Nations, at least in the view of Japanese officials. Robert Immerman of Columbia University's East Asian Institute suggests that the pacifist fabric making up the United Nations embodies so well the pattern that Japan outlined in its "peace constitution" 40-odd years ago that membership and participation in this multilateral organization is perhaps the only aspect of Japan's postwar foreign policy on which there has been virtual agreement across that country's political spectrum.[1]

With Japan's emergence as a global economic power and related calls from the United States and other allies for Tokyo to assume more international leadership responsibilities, the United Nations has been a logical channel through which the Japanese government has tried to demonstrate its willingness to help develop solutions to international political and economic issues. By working under the auspices of this multinational body, Tokyo has minimized the risk of a potential backlash from a strongly pacifist and isolationist public that generally has been averse to a more active, self-initiated diplomacy. At the same time the Japanese government could address international criticism about its apparent unwillingness to behave like a world-class power by pointing to its U.N. activities.

Raising Japan's Profile, Gradually - While Tokyo by and large follows Washington's lead in the United Nations — as it has on most foreign policy issues during the postwar period (see *JEI Report* No. 3A, January 24, 1992), some analysts view the mid-1980s as the period in which the Japanese government began to seize the initiative on a number of issues pertaining not only to the United Nations but to global and regional matters as well.

At that time the multinational organization appeared to be suffering from an image problem. Many members of the international community perceived the United Nations to be ineffective in handling frontline issues. The Middle East peace process, initially energized by the 1978 Camp David accords, was one issue going nowhere in the mid-1980s despite the adoption over the years of several resolutions as well as extensive General Assembly debate. Moreover, attention had begun to shift to such multilateral concerns as international finance and developing-country debt, which are handled primarily by other international agencies, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Japanese officials reportedly began reassessing the value of the United Nations and their country's role in it. Evidently, there was a body of opinion during the early 1980s that supported devoting more of Japan's resources to bilateral matters because of the increasingly questionable diplomatic payoffs of multilateralism. Some analysts maintain that President Ronald Reagan's lack of support for the United Nations during his two terms in office marked an important turning point in Tokyo's reexamination of its motives for seeking a larger role in the United Nations and its associated

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agencies. Mr. Immerman, for one, observed that "lack of consultation became the order of the day." Japanese foreign policy professionals apparently were troubled by U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Jeane Kirkpatrick's use of highly confrontational tactics, which some say were designed to justify a de facto end to U.S. participation in the United Nations.

The Japanese government broke free of its passive mode partly in response to Washington's acting to withhold a major portion of America's assessed contribution to the U.N. budget. The withholding amendment was attached to State Department authorization legislation, which was enacted in August 1985. The Japanese government reacted by proposing that the United Nations form a special panel to consider how to reform the multilateral organization's administrative and budgetary processes. Japanese policymakers realized that if they simply stood on the sidelines and allowed U.S. behavior to go unaddressed they would risk undermining the country's fundamental diplomatic principles, enraging public opinion and contravening international pressures to become increasingly involved in global affairs (see *JEI Report* No. 18A, May 9, 1986). Japan's foreign policy professionals also realized that, as the second-largest U.N. contributor at that time, Tokyo probably would be pressured to make up a considerable portion of the shortfall in the 1985 U.N. budget, of which an estimated $240 million was attributable, in part, to Washington's action.

Then Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe's September 1985 proposal to establish an 18-member group of intergovernmental experts to review U.N. administrative and financial matters put Japan on a new, higher-profile path in this multilateral organization. After strong initial opposition from certain American officials, the General Assembly adopted a resolution in December 1985 to establish the group. The special panel's recommendations, which Japan played an active role in drafting, were approved about one year later, and Washington gradually resumed its support payments.

Another unsettling U.S. policy action was Washington's 1985 decision to withdraw from UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) on the grounds that the organization was mismanaged, blatantly politicized and anti-Western. Great Britain also withdrew from UNESCO, which placed pressure on Japan to act similarly. Coming at about the same time as Washington's budget action, Tokyo did not want differences over UNESCO or other U.N. issues to become another irritant in increasingly contentious relations with the United States. Yet neither did the Japanese government want to be forced to resign from an agency that afforded it an opportunity to make nonmilitary contributions to global stability. In another show of independence policymakers said Japan would remain a UNESCO member and would try to correct the agency's problems from within.

From 1985 on Japan appeared more at ease in assuming a higher profile on a variety of political issues outside its immediate sphere. For example, Japanese diplomats evidently played an important mediating role in the drafting of a U.N. resolution that mandated the settlement of the Iran-Iraq War. During the late 1980s Tokyo also contributed civilian observers to U.N.-sponsored peacekeeping missions in Afghanistan, Iran/Iraq and Namibia. In terms of extending help to its neighbors, the Japanese government in 1990 stated its intention of pursuing a substantial role in supporting U.N.-sponsored efforts to bring peace to Cambodia (see *JEI Report* No. 2B, January 12, 1990).

Foreign Ministry officials also emphasize that throughout Japan's 36 years in the United Nations Tokyo always has played a leadership role on nuclear disarmament and arms proliferation questions due to the country's own experience as the victim of an atomic bomb. These initiatives go back as far as the early 1960s, when the Japanese government championed nuclear test ban and nonproliferation agreements. Tokyo's call for vigilance on weapons issues continues today. Speaking before the General Assembly last September, then Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama urged the United Nations to establish a registry for international transfers of conventional arms and called for stepped-up international inspection of nuclear faciiities and the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention (see *JEI Report* No. 37B, October 4, 1991).

Some analysts maintain, therefore, that it is unfair and incorrect to allege that Tokyo has not heard allies' calls for greater international political and economic burdensharing. Japan's foreign policy professionals for the past decade have been aware that this economic giant has to become more engaged in world affairs (see *JEI Report* No. 3A, January 24, 1992). But rather than drawing attention to their actions, foreign policymaking elites in Tokyo instead have chosen to begin expanding incrementally the country's role in managing global political and economic issues by working within the United Nations, a global forum highly respected by the Japanese public.[2]

Persian Gulf Crisis Paralyzes Japan, Polishes U.N. Image

The global crisis that resulted from Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait set back Japan's foreign policy professionals in their efforts to expand the country's involvement in global affairs, both in general and with particular significance within the U.N. context. At the time of the Security Council's sometimes marathon discussions concerning how to redress Iraq's contravention of international legal and diplomatic practices, Japan was not among the 10 nonpermanent members of the council. This not only permitted Japan a low profile but frustrated Tokyo, which knew it would be called on for financial support of any Security Council action.

Japan's eventual contribution of $13 billion in nonmilitary support of the coalition forces arrayed against the Iraqi army came after drawn out debate in Tokyo, which suggested that Japan did not share its allies' views of the gravity of developments in the Persian Gulf region. Moreover, the Japanese government's protracted deliberation of legislation that would have authorized the overseas dispatch of Japanese military and civilian personnel to participate in U.N.-sponsored peacekeeping operations — and the measure's November 1990 demise — also gave the impression that the country simply was unwilling to break new ground in supporting the multilateral organization's efforts to foster world political stability. Given the general international impression that developments in the Middle East required bold, immediate action, Tokyo appeared out-of-step, being unable — some have said unwilling — to deliver for a variety of reasons relating to public sentiment, domestic politics, political leadership and the nature of foreign policymaking in Japan (see *JEI Report* No. 3A, January 24, 1992).

However, the United Nations' authoritative handling of the Persian Gulf crisis — its swift and sure action on resolutions imposing economic sanctions and, ultimately, mandating Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait by a certain date — served to resuscitate the U.N.'s image as a vital forum for settling disputes as well as developing and implementing policies aimed at securing global peace. In the words of a Japanese diplomat who wished to remain anonymous, the Middle East crisis "reemphasized the role and spirit" of the United Nations and, in so doing, appeared to restore the faith of some Japanese in multilateral diplomacy. Whereas some policymakers in the early 1980s had come to question the effectiveness of this multilateral organization, many more believed that the United Nations had proven itself through the Persian Gulf crisis to be a very useful forum for managing systemic transition in the post-Cold War period.

Although undoubtedly embarrassed by the criticism accorded Japan for its performance during the Persian Gulf crisis, Tokyo last year evidently found it easier to exploit the resurgent popularity of the United Nations domestically than to address seriously the factors that had paralyzed the government at a time when its allies expected the country to rise to the occasion. The Japanese government seized its U.N. membership responsibilities with new vigor, in part to demonstrate to both domestic and international audiences that — notwithstanding its behavior during the Middle East crisis — Tokyo was willing and able to play an expanded international role.

Japanese government officials lobbied hard to regain a rotating seat representing Asia on the Security Council. The assignment, which began this past January 1, marks an unprecedented seventh two-year term for Japan. Observers have suggested that Japan's ability to gain one of the rotating seats indicates the U.N. membership's recognition of Japan's increasing role in world affairs. Tokyo

also campaigned effectively for the appointment of Yasushi Akashi, the most senior Japanese national in the U.N. secretariat, to be United Nations Special Representative in Cambodia. In other areas, too, Tokyo has behaved more assertively on policy questions pertaining to Asian security, such as opposing North Korea's alleged effort to develop nuclear capabilities. In addition the government has pushed initiatives to strengthen the United Nations' peacekeeping functions. For example, former Foreign Minister Nakayama proposed to the September 1991 General Assembly meeting the establishment of a "conflict-prevention system," which would upgrade the secretariat's ability to gather and analyze information on potential areas of conflict so that preemptive diplomatic measures could be taken.

Mr. Nakayama also went public with an issue that long has troubled Tokyo when he urged the deletion of two clauses of the U.N. charter that brand Japan and Germany as "enemy states." His argument was simple: the world situation had changed dramatically since 1945 when these provisions were adopted (see *JEI Report* No. 37B, October 4, 1991). Further elevating Japan's profile in the United Nations, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa attended the late January summit of the five permanent and 10 rotating members of the Security Council. This first-ever gathering of leaders under Security Council auspices was called by British Prime Minister John Major, in part, to maintain the spirit of cooperation established during the gulf crisis.

Against this backdrop certain senior Japanese officials and parliamentarians have revived a campaign to revise the U.N. charter to allow Japan to join the United States, Russia (which inherited the seat formerly held by the Soviet Union), Great Britain, France and the People's Republic of China as a permanent member of the Security Council. Since the late 1950s Japanese policymakers periodically have tried to press this issue but have not been successful for a variety of reasons. This time around, however, the bid for a permanent seat was offered from the top. Mr. Miyazawa, in his address to the late January Security Council summit, called on members to "consider thoroughly ways to adjust [the U.N.] functions, composition and other aspects so as to make it more reflective of the realities of the new era." This was the first time in an international forum that a Japanese leader had articulated, even in somewhat indirect terms, the country's aspiration for permanent Security Council status.

Observers caution, however, that Japan's increased activities in the United Nations during the past two years, and particularly Tokyo's campaign for a permanent seat, do not necessarily portend a dramatically higher profile for Japan in the United Nations or in world affairs in general. Not enough spade work has been done within the foreign policy bureaucracy, the Diet and among opinion leaders concerning Japan's intentions within the United Nations and how a permanent seat would facilitate Japan's foreign policy goals, they point out. Foreign Ministry officials confirm that a unified, coherent view of Japan's role in the United Nations simply does not exist yet. Japan's more recent busy behavior instead may represent an effort to deflect preemptively international criticism that Japan does not "do enough" in the global arena.

Differing Views on Japan's Role in the United Nations

Japan's efforts to carve out a new role for itself in the United Nations will be pushed and pulled in different directions. It is unclear when, if at all, some policy cohesion will emerge. According to Mr. Immerman of Columbia University, Japan's foreign policy professionals (which he defines as bureaucrats and academics linked to the Foreign Ministry and the Finance Ministry) may find themselves butting heads with Japanese politicians and business executives over how the country should participate in this organization. Even a consensus among these parties could have trouble winning acceptance from the Japanese public.[3]

Political/Business Elites - Influential politicians and businessmen have been strong proponents of the call for a permanent Security Council seat for Japan. This group's primary concern appears to be obtaining for Japan the prestige associated with permanent member status. As an economic giant whose actions have ripple effects throughout the world, Japan simply deserves this

position of influence to place it on a par with other major powers, this group argues. Japan's ability as a permanent Security Council member to affect policy development and alter budgetary and administrative guidelines ranks lower as a concern to these politicians and businessmen.

Foreign Policy Professionals - Foreign policy professionals' view of Japan's role in the United Nations is more complex. Judging by the remarks of some Foreign Ministry officials, there does not appear to be a lot of urgency attached to resolving the permanent seat issue. While Japanese press reports quoted senior government officials as saying that Mr. Miyazawa's remarks at the January summit were meant to be heard as Tokyo's request for a permanent seat, Japanese diplomats have emphasized the indirect nature of Mr. Miyazawa's remarks. "The prime minister did not explicitly request a permanent seat for Japan," said one Foreign Ministry official who did not wish to be identified. "We have not really tabled an official candidature."

Japanese foreign policy professionals suggest that their energies and attention first should be devoted to developing a "vision" of Japan's role in the new world order. Only after more clearly grasping the country's foreign policy goals will policymakers be able to understand how best to utilize the United Nations to achieve them, this group maintains. In addition, those diplomats involved in U.N. affairs point out that they have achieved the most progress in expanding Japan's role in this body by proceding in a quiet, gradual manner.

They also scoff at those politicians and business leaders who are concerned only with the prestige that comes with being a permanent member of the Security Council. Japanese diplomats say there is a very strong view within the Japanese foreign policy community that the country should be doing more to contribute to the resolution of global issues than making financial contributions. "Being a permanent member of the Security Council is not just a 'status symbol;' it brings with it many responsibilities and obligations," a Foreign Ministry official recently remarked.

This group also appears more sensitive to the implications of opening the U.N. charter for revision. The United States, while not opposing outright a permanent Security Council seat for Japan, has objected strongly to changing the charter for fear of precipitating a flood of requests from other member countries demanding changes. India and Venezuela, for example, also have urged a reconfiguration of the Security Council to conform to contemporary global conditions and to give greater representation to developing countries. Japan's critics also point to the fact that Germany, which also remains labeled an "enemy state," has not pushed for a permanent seat on the Security Council.

Rather than lighting the fuse on this issue, the Foreign Ministry has proposed respecting the interests of the five permanent members for the time being. Japanese diplomats feel that the country would have equal, if not better, opportunities to demonstrate global leadership by working cooperatively with other major powers within the current framework. In this regard Tokyo also has backed off its request that the two "enemy state" clauses be deleted. Foreign policy professionals are concerned that action here also risks opening a Pandora's box of other countries' demands for charter changes. This group obviously would prefer to have this outdated stigma removed — but not at any cost.

Being the major ministry involved with U.N. affairs, however, the Foreign Ministry naturally has among its ranks those who believe that the current Security Council arrangement amounts, for Japan, to "taxation without representation." Japan's assessed U.N. budget share was 11.38 percent in 1991, second only to that of the United States (25 percent) and only slightly less than the combined shares of France (6.25 percent), Great Britain (4.86 percent) and China (0.79 percent) (see Tables 1-3). Diplomats who favor more equity in this arrangement contend that Japan should have a stronger say on budget and operational issues.

Table 1: **Status of Selected Members' Contributions to the United Nations' Regular Budget, 1991**

(in dollars)

	Scale of Assessments	Assessed Collections*	Contributions Outstanding		
			Prior Years	Current Year	Total
United States	25.00	$301,326,450	$0	$266,407,875	$266,407,875
Japan	11.38	104,844,802	0	0	0
Soviet Union**	9.99	48,659,792	0	46,019,313	46,019,313
Germany	9.36	86,234,398	0	0	0
France	6.25	57,581,723	0	0	0
Great Britain	4.86	44,775,548	0	0	0
Italy	3.99	36,760,172	0	0	0
Canada	3.09	28,514,721	0	0	0
People's Republic of China	0.79	7,278,329	0	0	0
Other Countries	25.29	210,307,138	64,304,798	62,651,959	126,956,757
Total	100.00	926,283,073	64,304,798	375,079,147	439,383,945

*Does not include voluntary contributions.
**Does not include contributions by Belarus and Ukraine.

Source: United Nations Secretariat

Table 2: **Selected Members' Contributions to the United Nations' Regular Budget, 1992**

(in dollars)

	Scale of Assessments 1992-94	Proposed Net Contributions*
United States	25.00	$298,619,001
Japan	12.45	122,609,322
Soviet Union**	9.41	92,670,982
Germany	8.93	87,943,875
France	6.00	59,088,830
Great Britain	5.02	49,437,654
Italy	4.29	42,248,513
Canada	3.11	30,662,414
People's Republic of China	0.77	7,583,066
Other Countries	25.02	246,607,939
Total	100.00	1,037,471,596

*Does not include voluntary contributions.
**Does not include contributions by Belarus and Ukraine.

Source: United Nations Secretariat

Table 3: **Selected Members' Contributions to the United Nations, 1989-90**

(in thousands of dollars)

	1989		1990	
	Assessed	Voluntary	Assessed	Voluntary
United States	$457,080.8	$522,833.2	$716,275.7	$555,794.4
Japan	255,121.0	514,194.6	309,411.0	392,175.1
Soviet Union*	317,038.2	6,624.8	0.0	4,378.8
Germany**	261,201.2	180,699.5	225,280.1	210,532.3
France	184,944.6	87,400.9	168,218.7	102,276.9
Great Britain	134,711.4	163,690.9	115,741.5	164,506.5
Italy	107,883.7	249,146.6	92,461.2	173,847.2
Canada	83,307.6	152,898.8	78,994.0	110,915.6
People's Republic of China	25,221.5	9,403.2	23,772.9	10,811.1
Other Countries	621,199.0	1,335,101.1	877,350.1	1,728,771.3
Total	2,447,709.0	3,221,993.6	2,607,505.2	3,454,009.2

*Does not include contributions by Belarus and Ukraine.
**Combined total for East Germany and West Germany.

Note: Assessed Contributions - Contributions to the regular budget of the United Nations, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the International Convention Against Apartheid in Sports, the U.N. Emergency Force, including the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force (UNEF, including UNDOF), the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the U.N. Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG), the U.N. Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), the U.N. Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), the U.N. Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N. (FAO), the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the U.N. Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

Voluntary Contributions - Contributions to U.N. trust funds, the U.N. Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the U.N. Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the U.N. Environment Program (UNEP), the U.N. Center for Human Settlements (UNCHS), the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), the U.N. Development Program (UNDP), UNDP-administered trust funds, the World Food Program (WFP), the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the U.N. Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA), ILO, UNESCO, WHO, UPU, IMO, WMO, WIPO, IAEA and ICAO.

Source: U.N. Committee on Contributions

Die-Hard Pacifism - What ultimately may continue to limit Japan's ability to play a more meaningful role in the United Nations — as a permanent Security Council member or not — are the views of the Japanese public. The pacifist sentiments that flourished in Japan following World War II remain quite strong. Pacifism, in fact, is the rationale most often cited for the aversion among many Japanese to extensive overseas engagements, either military or political. As a result, the Japanese public has bridled whenever struck by the perception that policymakers are pushing the country too

far, too fast in the foreign policy area. Some observers contend that this lingering popular resistance to a more active, high-profile diplomacy is all the more reason for Japan to pursue expanded global responsibilities in a gradual manner within the context of the United Nations.

A prime indicator of the extent to which public opinion has helped to thwart Tokyo's efforts to play a more engaged role in world affairs is the U.N. peace cooperation bill. This proposal would authorize Japanese military personnel to participate in United Nations-sponsored peacekeeping activities. Members of the political opposition have portrayed the measure as stretching too far the 40-odd-year interpretation of Japan's "peace constitution," which bars the dispatch overseas of Japanese military personnel to engage in collective defense arrangements. The general esteem given this clause of the constitution makes the opposition parties' cooperation in passing the bill important; without their imprimatur the ruling Liberal Democratic Party senses that the proposal would strike a raw nerve in World War II-era Japanese fearful of resurgent militarism. Although as proposed the legislation would limit dispatches strictly to U.N.-sponsored peacekeeping missions — not unlike those in the Middle East and elsewhere to which Japanese civilians already have lent their support — the government still finds too little backing and twice has withdrawn the bill from the Diet.

Despite the many different revisions to make the peacekeeping support bill enactable, its prospects for passage still appear dismal. Japanese foreign policy professionals, in particular, have been pressing for expeditious consideration of this legislation because it would give Japan authority to make important new contributions to safeguarding peace. Specifically, the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia, which recently was authorized by the Security Council, would provide Japan with an important opportunity to demonstrate its willingness to assume more leadership responsibility in the region. Tokyo originally planned to send peacekeeping troops to UNTAC, but without passage of the peacekeeping bill it is limited to contributing civilian personnel to help monitor the war-torn country's elections and perform other nonmilitary peacekeeping activities (see *JEI Report*, No. 6B, February 14, 1992).

Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe has scrambled to try to develop a compromise measure that would pass the Diet. However, even his watered-down alternative, which would render inactive any provisions that authorize the participation of Japanese military personnel in "riskier" U.N. peacekeeping activities, may fail because it is considered too weak by the LDP and too bold by the opposition parties (see *JEI Report* No. 8B, February 28, 1992). Since Mr. Miyazawa promised participants at the Security Council summit that he would do his utmost to shepherd this legislation through the Diet, a third setback will make Japan — as well as the prime minister — vulnerable to allied criticism that the country does not know how to behave like a world-class power.

Other Potential Constraints to an Expanded U.N. Role

Even with the development of a coherent, politically acceptable policy on Japan's role in the United Nations, Tokyo's effectiveness within the multilateral organization may be limited by personnel and staffing problems. If a country is to have an impact at all on policy development within the United Nations, it needs a cadre of foreign policy professionals specifically trained in the complexities of U.N. operations. For almost as long as Japan has been a U.N. member it has been underrepresented in terms of professional staff, which generally has numbered around 100 people — about half of what the secretariat regards as optimum.

Some observers maintain that this deficit has limited Tokyo's ability to become involved in a major way on the wide range of U.N. policy, programmatic and organizational matters. Several reasons explain why Japan's assigned personnel slots for the United Nations are not proportional to its level of financial support for the organization (see *JEI Report* No. 7A, February 22, 1991). One reason given by the Foreign Ministry is that Japan missed out on the initial allocation of responsibilities. Foreign Ministry sources add that the generally uncompetitive salary/benefits package for a U.N. posting also makes it hard for the government to attract good Japanese applicants. (Even when

exchange and salary rates benefited the Japanese in years past, however, there was a shortfall in Japanese staffing.) In addition, since about half of the country's U.N. appointees come from the Foreign Ministry or other government agencies, the turnover of Japanese personnel tends to be unusually high as the bureaucrats usually stay for only two- or four-year tours before being sent back to Tokyo or given another overseas assignment. Observers say that if Tokyo wants to play more of a leadership role in the United Nations in the years to come, the Japanese government may find it beneficial to revise its posting practices and find ways to attract and keep more qualified staff; these people then could provide more support for higher-profile U.N. activities. The Japanese government's current priorities, however, do not appear aimed at addressing the bureaucratic needs associated with a more active diplomacy (see *JEI Report* No. 3A, January 24, 1992).

Some analysts also have expressed concern that Japan's deliberative, consensus-oriented policymaking style may inhibit the country's ability to act decisively within the United Nations, particularly in the event of another crisis comparable to the one created by Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. Foreign policy professionals and others suggest, however, that Tokyo's "marching orders" to its U.N. delegation will not limit Japan's participation in important policy debates. Columbia University's Immerman has observed that Tokyo's U.N. activities are not as politicized or as entwined in an intragovernmental web as Washington's initiatives; in some ways, he adds, the Japanese delegation may enjoy comparatively more flexibility than its American counterpart.[4]

The Japanese government's tendency to become distracted in the pursuit of various diplomatic goals by domestic political problems also concerns those Japanese and allied observers who are anxious to see Japan move toward global center stage. The Foreign Ministry's most recent attempt to salvage the U.N. peacekeeping support bill, for example, has been complicated by the Diet's preoccupation with two political scandals — one involving a former close associate of Mr. Miyazawa and possible other high-ranking LDP members and the other possibly embroiling members of the ruling LDP and the opposition parties. Until and unless the government can reform the electoral system (see *JEI Report* No. 9B, March 6, 1992), domestic political turmoil no doubt will continue to interfere with the evolution of Japanese diplomacy.

Outlook: A Good 'Second Man'

Tokyo may feel overwhelmed by the sometimes conflicting forces that affect deliberation of its role in the United Nations and, what is more important, its conceptualization of Japan's overriding diplomatic mission in the new world order. Since the former policymaking task really cannot be broached effectively without undertaking the more difficult latter examination, Foreign Ministry officials suggest that such issues as a permanent Security Council seat probably will be relegated to the back burner for quite some time.

Within the Japanese government, however, there is a broad base of support for using the United Nations as a forum in which to demonstrate Japan's ability to make important, nonmilitary contributions to help rectify the entire gamut of political, economic, scientific, environmental and other problems affecting the world. In one Japanese observer's words, Tokyo wants to accumulate a record of concrete achievements within this multilateral organization and, in effect, resume a gradual expansion of Japanese involvement in global economic and political policymaking — a movement that appears to have been derailed by the gulf crisis.

Foreign Ministry officials also emphasize that Japan does not regard a higher-profile role in the United Nations as a challenge to U.S. leadership or as an indication that Tokyo will pursue increasingly independent policy actions. While Tokyo may strike out on its own on issues pertaining to Asia, Japanese foreign policy professionals stress that the Japanese government is committed to implementing the partnership precepts of the Tokyo Declaration concluded by President Bush and Mr. Miyazawa in January (see *JEI Report* No. 2B, January 17, 1992). Japan hopes to play an "enlightened

role," one that complements U.S. leadership, they say. These observers stress that Japan's U.N. role will be that of a "good 'second man'," willing to cooperate and coordinate with the United States according to each country's areas of strength.

For further information, contact **Barbara Wanner.**

Notes

[1]Paper presented by Robert Immerman, East Asian Institute, Columbia University, to the Woodrow Wilson Center conference "Japan and the World," Washington, D.C., January 27-28, 1992.

[2]*Ibid.*

[3]Robert Immerman, Senior Research Associate, East Asian Institute, Columbia University, telephone interview, March 2, 1992.

[4]*Ibid.*

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The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Japan Economic Institute.